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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
PUBLIC HEARING

DATE: 9/28/04  
TIME: 7:30-9:00 P.M.  
PLACE: Westwood Conference Room  
1800 West Bridge Street  
Wausau, WI 54401

The following transcript are the comments made  
at the above-mentioned hearing.

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1 MR. HOLEY: Good evening. My name is  
2 Mark Holey. On behalf of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
3 Service, I welcome you to this public hearing.

4 The purpose of this hearing is to receive  
5 comments from the public on the Fish and Wildlife  
6 Service's proposal to delist the Eastern  
7 distinct population segment of the gray wolf.

8 I am the project leader of the Fish and Wildlife  
9 Service's resource office in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and  
10 I will serve as the presiding official for this  
11 hearing. Mariann Merkel will be the court reporter  
12 this evening who will prepare the written record of  
13 all statements made during this hearing. The  
14 transcripts of the hearing will be posted on the  
15 website at the Midwest region of the Fish and Wildlife  
16 Services in a few weeks. The address for the website  
17 is available on the materials out in the lobby.

18 I really have no involvement with the delisting  
19 proposal except for running this hearing so I am an  
20 impartial participant at this hearing. However, there  
21 are other Fish and Wildlife representatives with us  
22 this evening and they are assisting with the hearing  
23 and many of them will also be reviewing the comments  
24 and helping the Service to come to its final decision  
25 on this proposal, and these people are to my left,

1 Laura Ragan, the Staff Endangered Species Biologist  
2 from our regional office in Minnesota who is also the  
3 principal author of the proposal. Ronald Refsnider,  
4 the Regional Listing Coordinator from our  
5 Minneapolis office, and Janet Smith, the Field  
6 Supervisor of our Green Bay field office.

7 This is a public hearing under Section 4 of the  
8 Federal Endangered Species Act 1973. Notice of the  
9 proposal to remove the gray wolf in these United  
10 States from the list of endangered and threatened  
11 wildlife and the 120 day public comment period was  
12 published in the federal register on July 21, 2004,  
13 beginning on Page 42,664. A notice of the nine public  
14 hearings being held in the Midwest was published in  
15 the Federal Register on August 13, 2004, on Page  
16 50,147. There may be additional hearings scheduled in  
17 the northeastern United States, if so, the dates and  
18 location will be announced in the Federal Register and  
19 will be posted on the Service's website. Conveying  
20 these public hearings is one of the methods that the  
21 Fish and Wildlife Service is using to solicit data and  
22 comments from the public on this proposal.

23 No formal decision has yet been made regarding  
24 this proposal, nor will any decision be made at this  
25 hearing. Public comments on this proposal will be

1           accepted through November 18, 2004. After review and  
2           consideration of the existing administrative record  
3           your comments, your interpretation of the existing  
4           data and all other information gathered during the  
5           comment period the Fish and Wildlife Service will make  
6           a final decision on this proposal. Information that  
7           you provide in your comments this evening will become  
8           part of the administrative record and will be  
9           considered by the Fish and Wildlife Service in the  
10          decision-making process.

11                 If you have not seen them already, there are two  
12          tables out in the foyer area one of the tables is a  
13          registration table where you will need to take a  
14          numbered note card if you wish to make an oral  
15          presentation or comment tonight, and I will be calling  
16          on those numbers in a little bit. If you do not wish  
17          to speak tonight, but would like to get on our mailing  
18          list to receive future information on this proposal,  
19          please add your name and mailing address or your  
20          e-mail address to the mailing list sign up sheet,  
21          which is also in the foyer area at the registration  
22          table. There also is a second table in that area that  
23          has a variety of written information about this  
24          proposal, about wolves, and about the Endangered  
25          Species Act. So if you haven't seen that material,

                  Merkel's Reporting Services 1-715-387-1247

1 please feel free to take whatever you need from that  
2 table.

3 I especially want to point out the green sheet,  
4 which provides details on several ways you can get  
5 more information on the proposal and also explains  
6 several methods you can use to submit written comments  
7 other than at tonight's hearing. The green sheet also  
8 lists the dates and locations of the other public  
9 hearings. There is also a light blue comment form,  
10 which you can use to turn in written comments tonight  
11 or by mail.

12 When I call your number to present your comments,  
13 please come to one of the microphones, which there is  
14 one at this side and one over there, and when you be  
15 begin your comment, please state your full name and  
16 spell your last name, identify any organization you  
17 may represent and give your state of residence.

18 If you have a written copy of your comments, you  
19 may give it to me or the court reporter to enter into  
20 the record as a written comment.

21 Oral statements will be limited to five minutes  
22 so that all who wish to make oral comments will have  
23 the opportunity to do so. As I understand, we have  
24 already about 15 people who would like to talk so that  
25 will take up the majority of our time. If you stray

1 from the issue, exceed your time limit, engage in  
2 personal insults or make other inappropriate remarks,  
3 I will ask you to promptly wrap up your comments.

4 At the end of the evening, there may be time to  
5 provide another opportunity for speakers to finish  
6 their comments if they were not able to do so in the  
7 allotted five minutes. To maximum the opportunities  
8 of others to express their comments, I ask that you  
9 refrain from commenting on issues beyond the scope of  
10 the Fish and Wildlife Service's wolf delisting  
11 proposal.

12 This is an informal hearing, therefore, you will  
13 not be questioned or cross-examined in connection with  
14 your comments. This hearing is solely intended to  
15 obtain your comments so the Fish and Wildlife Service  
16 can consider them when making their final decision on  
17 this proposal.

18 Therefore, Fish and Wildlife officials will not  
19 respond to questions or engage in any discussion of  
20 the proposal during the hearing. The previous  
21 presentation and question and answer session were  
22 intended for questions and discussions. So we will be  
23 devoting this portion of the evening to receiving your  
24 comments.

25 If you have questions about the proposal or about  
Merkel's Reporting Services 1-715-387-1247

1 the Endangered Species Act, I encourage you to take  
2 advantage of the materials at the information table  
3 and on our website.

4 You may want to read them and then submit written  
5 comments later. There may be opportunities to ask  
6 questions of individual Fish and Wildlife staff  
7 outside of the hearing, possibly after the hearing  
8 closes, or during a recess if we take one. But I need  
9 to emphasize that this hearing is intended to receive  
10 public input and not respond to it. The Fish and  
11 Wildlife Service's responses to the issues and  
12 questions raised during the comment period including  
13 those that come up at this hearing will be published  
14 as part of the final rule as part of a reproposal or  
15 in a withdrawal notice of this proposal. That  
16 publication will probably occur in mid or late 2005.

17 Again, your comments are being recorded by the  
18 court reporter to assist the Fish and Wildlife Service  
19 in reviewing them and to preserve them for the record.  
20 Please keep in mind, however, that the reporter will  
21 only will be recording statements made into the  
22 microphone. Comments from the audience or other  
23 statements made away from the mics or made to the  
24 audience will not become part of the record and will  
25 not be considered by the Fish and Wildlife Service

1 when making the final decision on this proposal. All  
2 oral comments must be made into the microphone and  
3 directed to the front of the room.

4 In addition to or instead of providing oral  
5 comments tonight, you may submit comments in writing,  
6 by mail or by fax. Written comments may be submitted  
7 tonight to me, to the staff at the registration table,  
8 or sent to the Fish and Wildlife Service later.

9 Oral comments will not be accepted outside of a  
10 public hearing setting. As I have mention, written  
11 e-mails or fax comments will be accepted through  
12 November 18, 2004, and will be given the same serious  
13 consideration as oral comments presented here this  
14 evening.

15 We will conclude the hearing at 9:00 clock. If  
16 we have covered all those who wish to speak before  
17 that time, we may recess the hearing, go off record  
18 until either additional persons indicate that they  
19 would like to speak or until the 9:00 p.m. time frame  
20 approaches. At that time, we will reconvene the  
21 hearing, go back on record to receive additional  
22 comments or to officially close this hearing.

23 We will now open the floor to your comments.

24 After I call your number, please come to one of the  
25 microphones, state your name, spell it, identify who



1 the statistics, we are a little concerned about what  
2 happens after the delisting. Someone brought up about  
3 the wolf/human encounters that may happen, and I have  
4 something here I thought I would read.

5 There are more than 4.7 million dog bites each  
6 year reported, and it goes on to say countless more  
7 gone on unreported. There have been 44 people killed  
8 by dog bites since 1999 and half of those were  
9 children.

10 I have something here also on the deer. There  
11 have been in the year 2003 thirteen people killed by  
12 cars hitting deer. So it appears to me we have more  
13 to fear about deer or dogs than we do from wolves.  
14 I don't know of any case where wolves have violently  
15 attacked a human being.

16 The other thing is prey and livestock. Some of  
17 the statistics I have here states this is nationwide  
18 -- this is for the year 2000. Wolfs accounted for  
19 1600 head of cattle and calves, dogs accounted for  
20 26,000, coyotes accounted for 95,000, of course, the  
21 wolf is a control factor for the coyotes.

22 MR. HOLEY: I appreciate your comments  
23 and information, but do you have specific comments  
24 about the delisting proposal?

25 MR. POULMAN: Well, my comments are we

1 are concerned about what happens after the delisting.  
2 Okay, I'll skip over some of this then.

3 Someone raised issues about hunting and trapping  
4 and I think most of us here heard of Dave Reed he  
5 certainly is a candidate for hunter's rights, and he  
6 was outraged of hunting and trapping wolves. Now the  
7 reason we are concerned about hunting and trapping  
8 of wolves -I don't know if these statistics are up  
9 to date but last winter there were seven wolves killed  
10 by cars, there were seven shot that were found, we don't  
11 know how many were shot and not found, there were 20  
12 euthanize for prey on livestock and they do suffer  
13 from mange. Also the wolf survival rate in Wisconsin  
14 is like 26-28 percent so I really don't feel we have  
15 to be worried about being saturated by wolves and I  
16 am really concerned about hunting and trapping season  
17 on wolves, and we are concerned about the bear/dog  
18 issue too because most of these bear dogs that have  
19 been killed have been killed in the city in rendezvous  
20 sites and I have an article about the wolves that were  
21 killed in Ashland and the dogs killed in Ashland.

22 My point in talking tonight is to say, yes, we  
23 have a success story that the wolves have made a  
24 remarkable come back, but we are concerned about what  
25 happens after delisting takes place. Thank you.

1 MR. HOLEY: Thank you, very much.  
2 Presenter or Commentor Number Two.

3

4 PRESENTER NUMBER TWO - Mr. Pat Tlusty

5 My name is Pat James Tlusty, T-L-U-S-T-Y. I'm  
6 from Wisconsin here to represent myself. We have had  
7 some timber wolf kills last year on our cattle ranch  
8 and the federal trappers came down and trapped, ended  
9 up getting rid of two timber wolves, one last year and  
10 one this year. It is pretty spendy for state if they  
11 do take over the control and the management of wolves  
12 to be running around or else hiring federal trappers  
13 to come down and to go onto the property, and the  
14 wolves make a circuit every 12-14 days they come back  
15 but if they are continually trapping there. They have  
16 done trapping on the ranch for between a month and  
17 month and a half this last summer.

18 What I would like to see in the proposal is that  
19 when you are listed as a chronic herd, where you have  
20 wolf kills that are occurring in your area or next to  
21 your farm, that you have the opportunity to or the  
22 authority to shoot the wolves if they are causing  
23 problems with your livestock and then calling the DNR  
24 or the Feds to come in and take a look at the  
25 situation instead of always having to wait for them

1 to come into the area. That's about it.

2 MR. HOLEY: Thank you very.

3 Number three.

4

5 PRESENTER NUMBER THREE - MR. FRITSCH:

6 Good evening. My name is Ralph Fritsch,

7 F-R-I-T-S-C-H. I am the Chair of the Wildlife

8 Committee of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. The

9 Federation is the largest conservation organization

10 in the State of Wisconsin and is made up of 89 hunting,

11 fishing and trapping organizations throughout the

12 state.

13 The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation has been

14 working for over 20 years with U.S. Fish and Wildlife

15 Service, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

16 and other conservation organizations in this state to

17 assure the protection and proper management of the

18 gray wolf in the State of Wisconsin. Based on the

19 information available to our members and the general

20 public, we strongly support the proposed U.S. Fish and

21 Wildlife delisting of gray wolf from the Federal

22 Endangered and Threatened Species List.

23 Tonight is a time to recognize the success of the

24 Federal and State Endangered Species Laws and the

25 efforts of the public agencies and private citizens

1 assure the long term continued survival of the gray  
2 wolf in the eastern United States. These efforts show  
3 the true principles of conservation in this state and  
4 country. As true conservationists, hunters, anglers  
5 and trappers, were not satisfied with the depleted  
6 populations of many species and their habitat that  
7 were found throughout the United States in the last  
8 century and have been active supporters of species  
9 restoration efforts, the gray wolf just one of the  
10 such species.

11 However, it is now time to recognize that the  
12 restoration goals of the gray wolf have been exceeded  
13 and it is time to remove the now overly protected  
14 requirements of the Federal Endangered Species Act in  
15 order that the species can be professionally managed  
16 and other species are within the State of Wisconsin.

17 The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acknowledges  
18 that an overly conservative population estimate of 373  
19 to 410 wolves exist in the state, well over the number  
20 of 250 at which the species would be considered  
21 threatened in the state. Also the combined population  
22 of the wolves in Michigan and Wisconsin exceeds 750  
23 animals, well beyond the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
24 Service recovery plan population criteria of 200  
25 wolves.

1           Because of these high populations levels and  
2           overly protective requirements of the Federal  
3           Endangered Species Act, management problems involving  
4           the gray wolf are occurring, including the depredation  
5           of domestic livestock and hunting dogs. The delisting  
6           of the gray wolf will allow the Wisconsin Department  
7           of Natural Resources to professionally manage this  
8           species consistent with sound wildlife management and  
9           conservation principals. A strong Wolf Management  
10          Plan has been developed in the state with the input  
11          of a wide-range of interested citizens and groups. It  
12          is now time to put that plan fully into action.

13           The Federation would strongly encourage the Fish  
14          and Wildlife Service to accomplish the delisting as  
15          quickly as possible in order that the problems  
16          currently caused by the size of the gray wolf  
17          population in the state can be properly and  
18          professionally managed. Please do not take the full  
19          year that you have to make the final delisting  
20          decisions.

21           Lastly, the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation urges  
22          the Fish and Wildlife Service to return to the  
23          agency's year 2000 proposal, which separated out the  
24          Western Great Lakes and the Northeast Distinct  
25          Population Segments of wolves. We do not want to see

1 the Western Great Lakes delisting of the gray wolf  
2 caught up and delayed by the likely litigation  
3 relative to Northeastern wolf population.

4 Thank you very much for this opportunity to come  
5 in front of you.

6 MR. HOLEY: Presenter Number Four.

7

8 PRESENTER NUMBER FOUR - MR. HERNIEG:

9 My name is Duane Hernieg, H-E-R-N-I-E-G, and I'm  
10 an advisory board member of the Timber Wolf Alliance.  
11 TWA is a nonprofit education program of the Sigurd  
12 Olson Environmental Institute from Northland College  
13 at Ashland, Wisconsin. It began in 1987 as a support  
14 and educational organization for creating public  
15 awareness regarding the recovery of the gray wolf in  
16 Wisconsin and Michigan.

17 At our August board meeting, we discussed at  
18 length our position on the federal delisting of wolves  
19 in the Great Lakes region and would like to express  
20 the following four points:

21 Number one, we do support the delisting of gray  
22 wolves in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan; and  
23 although I understand the reasoning given earlier, we  
24 do not support the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's  
25 proposal to lump the Midwest with the Northeast

1           portion of the United States where efforts there are  
2           just being made to embark on recovery. One cannot  
3           spread the success of a region to another region far  
4           removed geographically and culturally expect adequate  
5           species protection. It cannot be said that the  
6           success of the wolf population in the Upper Midwest  
7           is adequate for the success of the entire Eastern  
8           segment. There are states in the Northeast that  
9           provide suitable wolf habitat where wolves could  
10          naturally return. TWA asks that U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
11          Service to rewrite the proposal to divide the regions  
12          of the Midwest and Northeast into separate DPSs.

13                 Number two, TWA would support the proposal for  
14          the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to subsidize state  
15          and tribal agencies in the management of the wolf  
16          population by financially contributing to population  
17          monitoring efforts. It is imperative that monitoring  
18          continues so we can gauge how large or small and how  
19          healthy the wolf populations are and correctly manage  
20          them. In the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services  
21          Delisting announcement, it stated, "the latest count  
22          in 1998 found a minimum of 2,450 animals and data  
23          collected since then do not indicate a decline. An  
24          additional population is well established in Michigan  
25          and Wisconsin with numbers of 360 and 373,

1           respectively. These figures are available only  
2           because of population monitoring. Our decisions are  
3           based on sound information derived from monitoring.  
4           Population monitoring is critical to the health of the  
5           wolf and it will only continue if adequate funding is  
6           available.

7                     Three, TWA asks the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
8           Services have an adequate plan in place to ensure  
9           protection of the wolf population in case of a drastic  
10          reduction in the numbers due to disease or other  
11          unknown maladies and that would could be detrimental  
12          to wolves. It makes little sense to get our wolf  
13          populations to this present place only to be  
14          devastated because of poor planning. The last thing  
15          anyone wants is to put wolves back on the endangered  
16          species list.

17                    Finally, as the wolf populations continue to  
18          prosper, TWA along with wolf biologists that are  
19          members of our advisory board would like to suggest  
20          that a National Large Carnivore Conservation Act be  
21          created. Similar to the Migratory Bird Act it would  
22          ensure population support of large carnivores  
23          across boundaries whether those boundaries are  
24          state or country. By creating the National Large  
25          Carnivore Conservation Act, we would continue to keep

1 our lands rich with all native species. Thank you.

2 MR. HOLEY: Presenter Number 5.

3 PRESENTER NUMBER 5 - MR. HOLSMAN

4 My name is Robert Holsman, H-O-L-S-M-A-N. I'm a  
5 wildlife faculty member of the University of  
6 Wisconsin, Stevens Point, that's my day job; but  
7 tonight, I'm here representing the Wisconsin Chapter  
8 of The Wildlife Society. The Wildlife Society is  
9 an international nonprofit organization of wildlife  
10 professionals. The Wisconsin Chapter of Wildlife  
11 Society is composed of over 200 professionals that  
12 work in various areas of administration including  
13 with, research, and teaching. Two of the core  
14 functions of our society are to increase communication  
15 between managers, researchers, and the public with  
16 respect to the welfare of wildlife in the State of  
17 Wisconsin and also to provide when the opportunity  
18 arises a unified professional opinion from a  
19 scientific basis on wildlife management issues. In  
20 the spirit of these two functions, I'm speaking on  
21 behalf of my 200 or so colleagues tonight with the  
22 respect to the proposal to delist the Eastern gray  
23 wolf from the Eastern DPS.

24 Let me say first that the Wisconsin Chapter of  
25 the Wildlife Society does support the proposal to

1 delist the gray wolf in the Great Lakes states of  
2 Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin and I will accent  
3 some of the sentiments provided by some our previous  
4 speakers in putting a caveat on that that and we I'm  
5 not in favor of the delisting for the entire Eastern  
6 DPS. In terms of supporting the delisting in the  
7 three Great Lake states that we have heard about  
8 tonight, there are clear scientific evidence that  
9 shows the gray wolf populations in these states  
10 are no longer endangered or threatened. Furthermore,  
11 the state management plans that have been put in place  
12 in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin will share a  
13 robust population of wolves into the future. However,  
14 the Wisconsin Chapter will stop short of supporting  
15 delisting throughout the entire Eastern DPS. In 2000,  
16 as has been mentioned here tonight, it was considered  
17 originally to have the two units, the western Great  
18 Lakes distinct population segment, which will be  
19 restricted to Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin and  
20 the surrounding states of North Dakota, South Dakota,  
21 Iowa, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio, when federal gray  
22 wolf reclassification was finalized, these states were  
23 lumped into a much broader geographical region. We  
24 heard from you folks tonight some of the rationale  
25 behind that, legal or otherwise, but we still feel

1 obligated to speak on the issues, because in making  
2 this sweeping delisting process, we feel you are  
3 essentially closing the door on future repopulation  
4 efforts of gray wolves to our neighboring states in  
5 the northeast.

6 Therefore, the Wisconsin Chapter of the Wildlife  
7 Society recommends the Service return to designating  
8 gray wolves into two distinct populations seeking  
9 whatever legal means necessary to do that and also to  
10 consider that proposal based on the following reasons:

11 The current federal delisting proposal places  
12 the Great Lakes and Northeast together and assumes  
13 that these two geographic areas are homogenous in terms  
14 of their wolf populations. This simply ignores the  
15 biological reality of wolf distribution, habitat, and  
16 other natural human caused threats as well as the  
17 inadequacy or non-existence regulations in the  
18 Northeast. There are vast areas of the Northeast New  
19 England states that are able to support wolf  
20 populations from a habitat perspective, but the  
21 landscape between a source population such as Michigan  
22 and Northeastern states presents a significant  
23 barrier to natural migration to inhabit these areas.  
24 Therefore, if there were to be any wolves in the  
25 Northeastern states it is likely it would be necessary

1 to physically remove them or undertake a  
2 reintroduction effort in those states. Without  
3 Federal support and protection in these areas, that's  
4 simply unlikely to occur.

5 Number two, the current federal Eastern DPS  
6 delisting in effect reduces the potential of a federal  
7 role in gray wolf recovery in the Northeast by  
8 returning the authority to the states to do this on  
9 their own. And related to that, the services said  
10 that the state having sound state management plans in  
11 place is important to ensure the long term survival  
12 of the states, yet there are no state gray wolves  
13 management plans in the New England states; and if the  
14 Service's proposal to delist is finalized states will  
15 be up in the air in terms of their management.  
16 Furthermore, in the Northeast there are no monitoring  
17 plans in place for the gray wolf either. So for all  
18 of these reasons we think it is very fundamental that  
19 the entire package be reconsidered on the basis of  
20 geography.

21 What has been accomplished in the Great Lake  
22 states is very good, in fact, it should be a model for  
23 further action for states in the Northeast seeking to  
24 also have wolves, and this should be the  
25 responsibility of the Service or the federal

1 government and not the individual Northeastern states.

2 Finally, with respect to this issue, again,  
3 although we support in principle delisting in the  
4 three states in the Great Lakes region, we are  
5 concerned that concomitant of loss of federal revenue  
6 in order to continue monitoring efforts that would  
7 accompany any delisting decision will somewhat  
8 handicap our ability to keep track of wolves in the  
9 future; and although the social tolerance and  
10 acceptability of wolves has increased dramatically  
11 over the last several decades, thus allowing them  
12 to return to our landscape, we feel this is somewhat  
13 tenuous situation, and as wolf numbers across the  
14 landscape remain at high levels, the potential and  
15 in fact reality of human-wolf conflicts is going to  
16 continue to be a real problem for land owners and  
17 bear-dog hunters and others and the social  
18 acceptability that we foster the last few decades,  
19 could go the other way and that events such as, for  
20 example, the legal killing of wolves if that were  
21 to increase if we didn't have significant and  
22 substantial funds in order to continue monitoring it  
23 would be difficult to detect changes at those levels.

24 I want to thank all of you for the opportunity  
25 to present these comments on behalf of the Wildlife

1 Society of Wisconsin chapter and I have written  
2 copies. I will bring them up.

3 MR. HOLEY: Presenter Number six.

4 PRESENTER NUMBER SIX: I changed my  
5 mind. I'm not going to speak tonight.

6 MR. HOLEY: Number Seven.

7

8 PRESENTER NUMBER SEVEN - Gary Muench

9 My name is Gary Muench. I am from Antigo,  
10 Wisconsin. I'm here representing myself. Last name  
11 M-U-E-N-C-H, and I did not take a lot of time, I don't  
12 have no handwritten paperwork on this talk I'm going  
13 to do, but I just don't think that we need the wolves  
14 in the state with the problem with the bear-dogs and  
15 everything, it has got to be an expense. So these  
16 dogs in the neighborhood of \$2,500, one was killed,  
17 somebody has to pay for that, and for all the rest of  
18 the predators we have a lot of fisheries out there,  
19 we have a good population of bear, along with the  
20 wolves. I think we have enough predators. I don't think  
21 we need the wolves. That's about all I got to say.

22 MR. HOLEY: Thank you for your comments.

23 Presenter Number 8.

24 PRESENTER NUMBER EIGHT: I'll mail  
25 something in for you.

1 MR. HOLEY: Thank you.

2 Presenter Number Nine.

3 PRESENTER NUMBER NINE: Pass.

4 MR. HOLEY: Presenter Number Ten.

5 PRESENTER NUMBER TEN: Pass.

6 MR. HOLEY: Presenter Number Eleven.

7

8 PRESENTER NUMBER TEN: Mr. Don Roberts.

9 My name is Don Roberts, R-O-B-E-R-T-S, and  
10 originally I was born and raised in Superior,  
11 Wisconsin. Currently I own land in Douglas County so  
12 I know what wolves are and what they have been over  
13 the years because that area has been well populated  
14 for many, many years, okay.

15 Now I have bird hunted up in Douglas County for  
16 many years, I am a bird hunter and a bow hunter, and  
17 my concern is I have talked to bird hunters in a field  
18 trial event in Solon Springs, Wisconsin, two weeks  
19 ago, and they had mentioned some of them were from  
20 Minnesota and they had mentioned that they had had  
21 dogs that were actually taken off their back porches  
22 by wolves, and it sounds like the wolves are mainly  
23 hungry when they do kill a dog. But as a bird hunter,  
24 I'm worried to the point where I have a dog right now  
25 that ranges on me pretty well, she gets out 100-150

1 yards sometimes, but she'll hold a bird for ten or 15  
2 minutes and I'm worried after talking to several bear  
3 hunters also besides the bird hunters that I'm  
4 endangering my dog to the wolves. If there is any way  
5 that you can tell me how I can protect my dog and feel  
6 safe about bird hunting, I'll go back to bird hunting  
7 up in Douglas County, but right now I'm afraid to go  
8 and mainly I'm afraid because of the stories I've  
9 heard, I mean, I have talked to a gentleman here  
10 in Wausau that lost three dogs and up in the Clam  
11 Lake area and he explained it sounds like sirens  
12 running through the woods and it became quiet; and when  
13 it was quiet, ten minutes later he got to where his dogs  
14 were and found them by the collar and the collars were  
15 already torn off these the dogs, the dogs were in  
16 pieces and the rib cages and everything is chewed up  
17 on them and the bear was still in the tree so, I mean,  
18 this is mother nature at work; but as the population  
19 of people grow in the outskirts of the country, I  
20 think we need either a way to educate people on how  
21 to protect what they do have or how to inform people  
22 what is really going on because I have talked to a lot  
23 of people and, for instance, the field travelers, the  
24 farmers, the bear hunters they are getting pretty  
25 angry on what is going on and I think something needs

1 to be done and if it means controlling the population  
2 so be it.

3 I thank you for giving me the time to say what  
4 I have come here to say, and I hope we can do something  
5 about this before it gets out of control. Thank you.

6 MR. HOLEY: Thank you for your comment.

7 Presenter Number Twelve.

8

9 PRESENTER NUMBER TWELVE: Mr. Adrian  
10 Wydeven. I'm with the Wisconsin Department of Natural  
11 Resources. Wydeven is W-Y-D-E-V-E-N. I live in Cable,  
12 Wisconsin.

13 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is  
14 pleased that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has  
15 begun the process to remove gray wolves in the Eastern  
16 distinct population segment from the list of federally  
17 endangered threaten species and return management to  
18 the state. The Wisconsin DNR supports the process and  
19 looks forward to taking the responsibility of  
20 management of the wolves in the state. The Wisconsin  
21 DNR has a long history of wolf conservation. In the  
22 1940s Eldo Leopold conservation commission member in  
23 Wisconsin fought to eliminate bounty payments on  
24 wolves. The State of Wisconsin ended bounty payments  
25 on wolves in 1957 and listed the gray wolf as a

1           protected species at that time, the first U.S. state  
2           to do so. In 1975, the Wisconsin DNR listed the gray  
3           wolf as a state endangered species when wolves  
4           returned to the state after an absences of 15 years.  
5           The Wisconsin DNR has conducted annual surveys on the  
6           state wolf population every year since 1979. These  
7           surveys have provided scientifically sound information  
8           on wolf population status in the state continuously  
9           for 25 years. In 1989, the State of Wisconsin  
10          approved the state wolf recovery plan that set the  
11          state goal for downlisting wolves to threatened status  
12          when the population exceeded 80 wolves. In 1999, the  
13          Wisconsin DNR approved the State Wolf Mangement Plan  
14          that set a state delisting goal of 250 wolves and a  
15          management goal of 350 wolves in the state outside of  
16          Indian reservations. These state goals were higher  
17          than federal goals to a provide assurance that wolves  
18          will not again become endangered in Wisconsin. Also  
19          in 1999, the Wisconsin DNR down listed wolves from the  
20          threatened status when the population exceeded 80  
21          wolves. Since 1983, Wisconsin has reimbursed all  
22          people requesting payments for verified wolf  
23          depredations. Careful stewardship by the Wisconsin  
24          DNR with help from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
25          has allowed the wolf population to go from 2 wolves in

1 1975 to more than 370 wolves in 2004.

2 The State of Wisconsin has far exceeded  
3 requirements for federal delisting of wolves. The  
4 goal for the state was to have at least a 100 wolves  
5 in Wisconsin and Michigan for five or more years. Two  
6 states have exceeded that goal for 11 years and  
7 currently share more than 734 wolves. Also the State  
8 of Wisconsin has had an approved management plan in  
9 place for five years. Wisconsin is currently  
10 reviewing that state plan. We understand that the  
11 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service delisting proposal is  
12 predicated on that management plan. We urge the U.S.  
13 Fish and Wildlife service to quickly complete  
14 delisting of wolves and return management to the  
15 states. Depredations on domestic animals is increasing  
16 in the state and more flexible management is needed.

17 Numbers of farm suffering wolf depredation grew  
18 from 8 in 2002, 14 in 2003, and 21 so far in 2004.  
19 While the federal downlisting to threaten status in  
20 2003 has provided some relief for dealing with wolf  
21 depredation, the problem has continued to grow and a  
22 more flexible management system is necessary to  
23 prevent establishment of wolves in unsuitable areas.  
24 Even tolerance of wolves is declining in portions of  
25 the state. More flexible management is necessary to

1 allow states to maintain the wolf population to levels  
2 that are acceptable to the public and at the same time  
3 are sufficient to maintain a self state population.

4 The gray wolf as with several other large  
5 carnivores will continue to be a special national  
6 significance after federal delisting is completed.

7 The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be  
8 insisting that the surveys of the wolf population will  
9 be continued for at least five years after delisting.  
10 Wisconsin DNR will gladly maintain high levels of  
11 population monitoring, but will need federal cost  
12 sharing on funding these surveys. For federal  
13 delisting to be possible, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
14 Service needs to make sure funds are shared with the  
15 states to provide reasonable monitoring of the wolf  
16 population.

17 The Wisconsin DNR congratulates the U.S. Fish and  
18 Wildlife Service in its successful recovery of gray  
19 wolves in the Great Lakes region. We are proud of our  
20 partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services  
21 in helping wolves recover. Also greatly appreciated  
22 is the help from other partners in U.S.D.A. Wildlife  
23 Services, U.S. Forest Service, the National Park  
24 Service, Wisconsin Indian tribes, Great Lakes Indian  
25 Fish and Wildlife Division, Wisconsin County Forests,

1 Minnesota DNR, Michigan DNR, Chippewa, Timberwolf  
2 Information Network, Feathers of Wildlife, National  
3 Wildlife Federation, and all other groups and  
4 individuals who support the wolf recovery in the  
5 state.

6 The Wisconsin DNR strongly supports the  
7 delisting of the gray wolf from the federally  
8 endangered and threatened species list. From a  
9 scientific perspective, the Department believes that  
10 the wolf population in Wisconsin is recovered and we  
11 have reached both federal goals for delisting as well  
12 as state goals for delisting.

13 The State of Wisconsin is committed to long term  
14 conservation of wolf populations in the state. We are  
15 committed to preventing wolves from ever again  
16 becoming endangered in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin DNR  
17 will work closely with our many partners to make sure  
18 wolves never return to our list of threatened and  
19 endangered species.

20 MR. HOLEY: Thank you, Adrian for your  
21 comments.

22 Presenter Number Thirteen.

23

24 PRESENTER NUMBER THIRTEEN - Ms. Lisa  
25 Yee-Litzenberg.

1 Hello, my name is Lisa Yee-Litzenberg. That is  
2 LISA, last name is Y-E-E-L-I-T-Z-E-N-B-E-R-G.

3 I just want to add I have copies of my testimony.  
4 I brought quite a few copies if anyone in the audience  
5 or Fish and Wildlife Service needs a copy I have  
6 those.

7 I am the Great Lakes Wolf Project Manager for the  
8 National Wildlife Federation based in Ann Harbor,  
9 Michigan, that's our Great Lakes regional office. I  
10 will be providing comments on behalf of National  
11 Wildlife Federation at this hearing.

12 The National Wildlife Federation has long played  
13 a role in wolf restoration efforts nationwide, both  
14 in helping to tailor common sense management plans to  
15 secure wolf recovery and in educating the public  
16 concerning facts and myths surrounding the animals.  
17 In keeping with NWF's past and present involvement  
18 in wolf conservation and recovery and on behalf of  
19 National Wildlife Federation's 4 million members and  
20 supporters nationwide including all 21 states of the  
21 Eastern Distinct Population Segment (DPS), I will  
22 given oral comments but NWF but please note we will  
23 be submitting more detailed written comments by the  
24 November 18th deadline.

25 The gray wolf is truly a success story for the

1           Endangered Species Act in the three Great Lakes States  
2           of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Wolves were  
3           nearly wiped out by humans in this region. Often  
4           under great political pressure, the U.S. Fish and  
5           Wildlife Service, the three state agencies and tribes  
6           stayed the course for wolf recovery and nurtured  
7           wolves back to health in the Great Lakes region.  
8           Today, wolves are thriving. Population estimates have  
9           as you have heard from others showed that there are  
10          about 360 wolves in Michigan's U.P., 373 in Wisconsin  
11          and 2,450 in Minnesota the last survey being done  
12          there in 1997-1998.

13                 Successful wolf recovery in the Great Lakes  
14          region is the direct result of the Endangered Species  
15          Act's protection of wolves from humans and also a  
16          positive shift in public attitudes towards wolves.

17                 This effort that has been so successful that more  
18          active management of wolves in the Great Lakes region  
19          may become necessary in the future. Such active  
20          management, however, must be carefully considered  
21          component of broader management goals. Wolf  
22          management must not be limited to take all aspects of  
23          management including population monitoring,  
24          depredation compensation, and education to maintain  
25          positive public attitudes toward wolves will need to

1           be continued. In addition, state tribes must have  
2           adequate funding to carry out their wolf management  
3           plans and recovery efforts.

4           In 2000, the Fish and Wildlife Service proposed  
5           a rule that would have established a Western Great  
6           Lakes DPS, a Northeastern Gray Wolf DPS, a Western Gray  
7           Wolf DSP and Southwestern DPS. At that time, National  
8           Wildlife Federation along with the majority of the  
9           conservation community, thousands of public  
10          commentators, and the peer reviewers themselves were  
11          all in support of the proposed rule in 2000.

12          In the final rule of 2003, the Fish and Wildlife  
13          Service abandoned its proposal for a Northeast  
14          distinct population segment, yet the Fish and Wildlife  
15          Service did not retreat from any of its original  
16          statements concerning the significance of the  
17          Northeast region. Instead, Fish and Wildlife Service  
18          abandoned further wolf recovery efforts in the  
19          Northeast on the grounds that "the area in the Western  
20          Great Lakes where wolves currently exist represent the  
21          entire range of the species within the Eastern DPS."  
22          This justification lacks scientific support. The  
23          Northeast currently shares a separate wolf population  
24          with Southeastern Canada. The Fish and Wildlife  
25          Service has an obligation under the Endangered Species

1 Act to promote recovery of this population, a  
2 population that is integral to the overall health of  
3 the gray wolf in the lower 48 states.

4 This proposed delisting rule will remove  
5 protection from wolves far beyond the states where  
6 wolf recovery has actually taken place. It is truly  
7 unfortunate, for if the Fish and Wildlife Service had  
8 finalized the 2000 proposal, the Great Lakes  
9 population of wolves, in all likelihood would be on  
10 its way to being delisted. As a result of the Fish  
11 and Wildlife Service changing its original proposal  
12 so that the Western Great Lakes and Northeast Wolf  
13 Distinct Segments were now combined into the one East  
14 Distinct Population Segment, the Great Lakes  
15 population will unnecessarily be swept into  
16 litigation concerning the Fish and Wildlife Service's  
17 failure to pursue recovery outside of the Great Lakes.

18 There are already two lawsuits pending that  
19 challenge of the legality of the Eastern DPS as  
20 established in the 2003 reclassification rule. NWF  
21 recommends that Fish and Wildlife work to resolve the  
22 legitimate concerns raised in those lawsuits, rather  
23 than pressing forward with delisting based on unsound  
24 science.

25 Under the Endanger Species Act, a species remain

1           threatened so long as it is at risk in a significant  
2           portion of its range. The wolf remains extirpated  
3           in roughly 95 percent of its range and yet the Fish  
4           and Wildlife Services never addressed whether this  
5           is a significant portion. Until it prepares a national  
6           wolf recovery plan addressing what is the "significant  
7           portion" of the range that must be restored, the Fish  
8           and Wildlife Service cannot legitimately conclude  
9           that the Northeast is not needed to achieve recovery  
10          and delisting.

11                 The Fish and Wildlife Service itself acknowledged  
12          in its proposed rule making that the historic range  
13          of the wolf would have "extensive and significant  
14          gaps" without wolf recovery in the Northeast; that a  
15          Northeast population is "significant and will  
16          contribute to the overall restoration of the species;"  
17          and that the wolf historically occupied the  
18          Northeastern United States and adjacent Canada is  
19          likely a "separate form" of the gray wolf. It is  
20          a consensus view, but scientific peer reviewers that  
21          establishing a separate Northeastern DPS would be  
22          an important step for gray wolf recovery. All of  
23          this strongly suggests that the gray wolf will remain  
24          at risk in a significant portion of its range so long  
25          as the Northeast wolf restoration remains incomplete.

1           The Fish and Wildlife Services approach is  
2           inconsistent with the letter and spirit of the  
3           Endangered Species Act. The mere fact that the Fish  
4           and Wildlife Service may have demonstrated the  
5           survivability of the gray wolf in the three states  
6           in the Great Lakes does not relieve it from  
7           responsibility to analyze the significance of the  
8           Northeast region to overall gray wolf recovery. The  
9           Fish and Wildlife Service has a duty address the  
10          endangerment of a species throughout major  
11          geographical areas and its historical range even when  
12          those areas are no longer occupied by viable  
13          populations. It also has a duty to consider all  
14          relevant listing and delisting factors, such as the  
15          vulnerability of a species to disease outbreaks when  
16          there is an insufficient distribution of populations.

17          Finally, the Fish and Wildlife Service has a duty  
18          to apply its Vertebrate Population Policy in a fair  
19          consistent fashion. This policy calls for  
20          establishment of Distinct population Segments only  
21          for a "discrete" population. By lumping Western Great  
22          Lakes wolves and Northeastern wolves together in the  
23          single Eastern DPS, the Fish and Wildlife Service has  
24          failed to satisfy the requirement that the discrete  
25          population be the subject of a Distinct Population

1 Segment.

2 The Fish and Wildlife Service's decision to  
3 create an Eastern DPS was done for the wrong reasons.  
4 Rather than promoting conservation, the Fish and  
5 Wildlife Service has taken this step for the clear  
6 purpose of terminating recovery efforts in the  
7 Northeast. The Fish and Wildlife Service's own  
8 vertebrate population policy makes clear that the DPS  
9 tool is designed to prevent the need for listing an  
10 entire species when some populations are healthy; it  
11 is improper to use it to avoid recovery efforts in  
12 important habitat areas where populations are not yet  
13 viable.

14 The Fish and Wildlife Service has an historic  
15 opportunity to build upon its successes in the Western  
16 Great Lakes by moving forward with the restoration of  
17 wolf in the Northeastern U.S. We hope to be able to  
18 work with the agency on this important endeavor.

19 Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

20 MR. HOLEY: Thank you for your comments.  
21 You going to turn in your comments?

22 PRESENTER NUMBER THIRTEEN: Yes, I will  
23 make copies.

24 MR. HOLEY: Presenter Number Fourteen.  
25 PRESENTER NUMBER 14: Pass.

1 MR. HOLEY: Presenter Number Fifteen.

2 PRESENTER NUMBER FIFTEEN: Pass.

3 MR. HOLEY: Is there a Presenter Number  
4 Sixteen?

5 PRESENTER NUMBER SIXTEEN - Michael  
6 Brust,

7 My name is Michael Brust, B-R-U-S-T. I'm from  
8 Marathon County, Wisconsin. I'm not here representing  
9 any individual organization, although I have been a  
10 -- I'm a former member of the Wisconsin Conservation  
11 Congress, a former Chairman of the Big Game Study  
12 Committee, Conservation Congress, and former  
13 secretary of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress.

14 I'm trying to figure out how to be polite here.  
15 I'm glad you are here, frankly, my opinion is you are  
16 here about five or ten years late. We have been  
17 through this process for quite some time. As I  
18 mentioned, the first goal was in 1989 when wolves we  
19 were told at that time that to establish that  
20 population, would secure the population for the State  
21 of Wisconsin. The Conservation Congress supported  
22 that effort. Of course that didn't solve the problem  
23 as soon as we met those criteria they were changed  
24 upward again and again, they went to 100, they went  
25 to 250 but you're here. Like I say, I'm a little

1 concerned as one gentleman talked about what is going  
2 to happen after delisting. I think that people in  
3 this state only have to look west to Minnesota to see  
4 what can happen. They have had a population that's  
5 been a problem, a serious problem, for quite some  
6 time. There was talk about how this population  
7 shouldn't be lumped in with Northeast population  
8 because it wasn't fair to them, well, when Minnesota  
9 had all those wolves they weren't considered even part  
10 of the Wisconsin, Michigan population so even though  
11 they were right next door and clearly adjacent they  
12 weren't considered population. Again, I'm not sure  
13 where the stone walling happened, certainly the  
14 National Fish and Wildlife Service is blamed for some  
15 of it, but you are here and to do something that I  
16 think is long over do. In regard to expanding this  
17 to Northeastern wolves I guess and, again I'm not an  
18 expert on that situation, haven't followed it that  
19 carefully, but I would hate to think that the people  
20 in those states would have to put up what we have put  
21 up with for the last 10 to 15 years. Hopefully, if  
22 they are delisted and population goes ahead in a  
23 sensible manner it would be a mute point, but we have  
24 had a difficult time trying to keep the public  
25 positive, try to support a reestablishment of the wolf

1 population, and I think that, again, I'm glad you are  
2 here, but I guess to make this clear I'm very much in  
3 support of finally delisting the wolves. Thank you.

4 MR. HOLEY: Thank you for your comments.

5 Is there a Presenter Number Seventeen.

6 I think that is all that have registered.  
7 Again, I wish to remind anyone if there is anybody  
8 that would like to speak at this time they can do so.  
9 If there isn't, then all the registered speakers have  
10 provided their comments, however, we will be here  
11 until 9:00, the published closing time for this  
12 hearing. In case additional persons wish to comment.  
13 However, it appears that no one wishes to talk so we  
14 will go off the record until someone indicates that  
15 they wish to comment or near 9:00. So the official  
16 part is now in recess and we will reconvene when  
17 someone else wants to talk or shortly before 9:00 to  
18 close the hearing.

19

20 (Break taken off the record).

21

22 MR. HOLEY: It is now 9:00. We will  
23 reopen this hearing and ask if anybody else would like  
24 to make comment.

25 Hearing none, I now officially close this

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